

Demon Cat

Does a demon cat haunt the U.S. Capitol? Some people think so. It is said that the cat appears on the grounds of the Capitol when bad things happen.

The demon cat first visited the Capitol in 1862. It was the middle of the Civil War. A guard fired his gun and the cat disappeared.

Evidence of the demon cat was seen again in 1898. A gas explosion damaged the Capitol. The next day, paw prints were found in the concrete. Next to the paw prints were the letters "DC." People said the letters stood for "demon cat."

The cat was seen before the stock market crashed in 1929. It was seen again before the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963. It has not been seen since. But many think that it could come back.

Capitol guards are usually the people who see the demon cat. They describe it as a black cat or a tabby cat. Some say that the cat can grow to the size of an elephant. Others say that the cat's eyes glow.

Is this cat truly supernatural? Does it predict something bad happening in Washington, D.C.? Or is there another explanation?

One explanation is that during the 1800s there was a mouse problem in the tunnels below the Capitol. The stewards brought in cats to live in the tunnels. The cats were supposed to catch the mice under the building.

Another explanation is that the cat the guards saw in the 1920s was Tige. Tige was the pet of President Coolidge. He was known to wander away from the White House.

Tige does not explain the cats that were seen before and after the 1920s. Some say the only explanation is that the cat is truly a demon. And, if it shows up again, be ready for bad luck!



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. Which event is NOT mentioned as one that the cat showed up for?
 - a. The assassination of President Lincoln
 - b. The stock market crash
 - c. The Civil War
 - d. The assassination of President Kennedy

2. Which of the following is a possible explanation for the demon cat?
 - a. President Coolidge's pet
 - b. President Kennedy's pet
 - c. Mouse hunting cats in the tunnels
 - d. A and C

3. Which of the following descriptions of the cat is MOST supernatural?
 - a. It's black
 - b. Its eyes glow
 - c. It can grow to the size of an elephant
 - d. It's a tabby

4. Why should you be ready for bad luck if the cat shows up again?
 - a. Because it means there are mice
 - b. Because each time it has been seen bad things have happened
 - c. Because there was a gas explosion
 - d. Because it wandered away from the White House

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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